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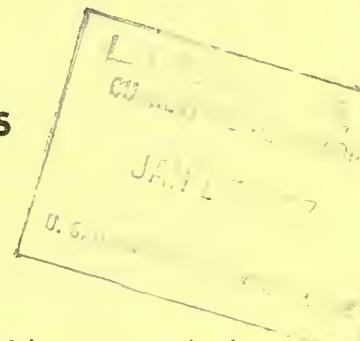
NUTRITION COMMITTEE NEWS

For exchange of information on nutrition education and school lunch activities.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, Washington, D. C.

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NUTRITION EDUCATION ACTIVITIES IN COLLEGES

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Thanks again

This issue contains the second of two articles on nutrition programs for youth. These articles were brought together from contributions some of you have sent us. The first, describing nutrition programs in high schools and youth organizations, appeared in the January-February 1957 issue of Nutrition Committee News.

survey by itself had not stimulated improvement in the diets of the girls.

This issue of NCN tells first about some of the studies made of the diets of college students and what they have revealed. Descriptions follow of several nutrition courses and projects that were designed to help students improve their current diets and learn basic principles for selecting nutritionally good diets under a variety of situations, now and later in life. The studies, courses, and projects are from reports of NCN readers. How representative they are of the large number of activities that are currently going on is unknown.

Many colleges, concerned about the food practices of their students, offer them a course in nutrition in the department of home economics. This may be the beginning course required of students majoring in nutrition or home economics or it may be a course specially designed for "nonmajors."

In order to develop courses that closely fit student needs and to help students fully realize their needs, teachers like to have information on what students eat, how good nutritionally their diets are, and what their attitudes are toward food. Therefore, teachers frequently undertake studies of the diets of incoming freshmen, all students in the college, or just those in their classrooms.

Each study indicates need for some nutritional improvement in diets of college students. The effectiveness of some present attempts to help students do this is being evaluated in colleges in which student diets are surveyed each year and year-to-year comparisons are made. At *Furman University*, Greenville, S. C., counseling was added when it was found that the diet

Food habits of college students

Some recent studies of food habits of college students indicate that they, like high schoolers, are frequent snackers. The caloric intake of some is higher than would seem desirable for proper weight control, and intake of some nutrients such as calcium or ascorbic acid may be low.

Students prefer milk for a snack.—The California Home Economics Association, through *San Diego State College*, San Diego, Calif., has made a statewide random sampling of 1-day, self-kept diet records of junior and senior high school students and college students to learn what snacks students eat and when they are eaten. The most popular snack was milk, although average daily intake as a snack was less than one-third glass per person. Candy was the next choice, followed by sandwiches, cookies, and carbonated drinks. More snacks were consumed in the afternoon than in the evening or morning. College students ate fewer snacks than younger students.

Students research and counsel.—At Furman University the nutrition class in the Home Economics Department began a study of diets of 133 freshman girls. The study has been continued through their 4 years of college. The girls kept 7-day diet records, and nutrition-class members scored each diet.

Diets of about half the girls seemed low in citrus fruit, milk, vegetables, and eggs. During the study week, they averaged about 3 snacks of cake, cookies, or candy a day. An average of 4 percent of the week's meals were skipped, of which half were breakfasts—32 girls missed 61 breakfasts. Since the followup study made the next year showed no significant improvement in these girls' diets, the nutrition students counseled with them at the beginning of their junior year. Whether or not the girls' food habits will benefit from this advice will be determined in the senior-year survey.

The nutrition students conducting this survey each year have benefited from the practical experience of seeing how they can help other young people.

Freshmen learn diet evaluation.—To help college freshmen in food and nutrition classes realize that dormitory meals are planned to provide adequate nutrient intake, the Food and Nutrition Department of *Texas Technological College*, Lubbock, Tex., asks them to keep a 3-day record of what they ate and did not eat of what was offered. They then compare what they had and what they could have had with the Recommended Dietary Allowances.

Considerable effort is made to have students analyze reasons for their dislikes of individual foods. In most cases, the students recognize that they dislike a food because of the way it is prepared or because they are not familiar with it. *Texas Technological College* has found it helpful for freshman students in nutrition to prepare foods they dislike in order to determine which way these foods would be acceptable to them.

Long-term diet study.—During a long-term study of the kind of diets chosen by 80 young college women at *North Texas State College*, State College, Tex., their caloric intake was found to be slightly lower than NRC recommended allowances. Their average height and weight, however, were greater than those of reference counterparts described in NRC allowances. Those who were over 20 had a somewhat higher caloric intake and were a little heavier than the younger girls.

At the same college, nitrogen metabolism studies carried on for 10 years indicate that many students have had poor protein intakes, as shown by the way their bodies retain nitrogen on a good protein intake. Two-thirds of these young women were storing nitrogen from the college diet.

Teaching to improve food choices.—Food preferences and nutritional adequacy of diets of 80 college women have been studied at *St. Francis College*, Fort Wayne, Ind. One-third of the women lived on campus where they ate all their meals; most nonresidents ate their noon meal at the cafeteria.

The average diet of resident students recorded for 7 days met or exceeded recommended allowances for protein, vitamin A, riboflavin, and niacin. It averaged close to recommended allowances for thiamine and ascorbic acid, but was low in calcium and iron. Nonresidents' diets were similar, except for being lower in ascorbic acid and vitamin A.

Breakfast was eaten regularly by 95 percent of the residents, 84 percent of the nonresidents, and omitted by 3 girls. Average caloric value of breakfast was 380 for resident and 280 for nonresident students.

Snacks were eaten chiefly to satisfy hunger, but also because of habit and social reasons. Between a third and a half of the students ate snacks of about 400 or more calories per day, which contributed negligible amounts of minerals and vitamins.

Students were given opportunities to express opinions concerning food preparation in the college and to make suggestions for food service improvement.

The study leader developed a program of informal classes to provide basic information on nutrition, meal planning, and food selection, to develop desirable attitudes toward food practices, to overcome food prejudices, and to create appreciation of some problems of institutional food service. The Basic 7 was used as a guide.

Dangers of food fads were discussed. These young women demonstrated strong food likes and dislikes, so their cooperation was enlisted to try certain foods, such as liver. Students were encouraged to discuss with the leader the whole study and special problems, such as relative cost in money, time, and labor of serving certain foods.

The leader planned college meals for an initial 4-week period that were nutritionally adequate, moderate in cost, and varied and pleasing in flavor, color, and texture. In the second period some foods for which dislike was expressed were included. New methods of preparing well-known foods were tried. The dietary intakes of some of the students were then reevaluated. Although precise comparison was not possible, there was some indication that their intakes of iron and calcium had improved.

Males have better diets than females.—Diet patterns of college freshmen and 15-year-old boys and girls in Montana have been compared by workers at *Montana State College*, Bozeman, Mont. To determine their

food habits, all students kept 7-day diet records and then were interviewed by a nutritionist from the college. Both boys and college men chose foods that provided a nutrient intake approaching recommended allowances, except for the 15-year-old boys whose intake of ascorbic acid was below the recommended level. A small percentage of both boys and men got less than a third of recommended amounts of calcium.

Besides being somewhat below recommended caloric intake, diets of girls and women were frequently low in iron, calcium, and ascorbic acid. Fewer than half the females had the full allowance of any nutrient.

Males consumed an average of 50 percent more calories than females their age. Greatest difference between diets of males and females was that males consumed the equivalent of 1½ to 2 cups more milk a day. More males than females in both age groups ate breakfasts that included a source of animal protein, a cereal, or both. Ten percent of all breakfast records for girls and women indicated only coffee, or nothing at all, was consumed.

Nutritionists recommended improving the breakfast pattern to include a fruit or fruit juice—preferably citrus, a cereal, and a source of animal protein, such as milk or eggs. They also advised girls and women to increase their milk consumption to the males' level of 3 to 3½ cups per day.

Nutrition courses in colleges

Nutrition instruction given to those preparing to teach was discussed in Nutrition Committee News for May-June 1955, Preparing Classroom Teachers for Their Role in Nutrition Education.

Elective courses.—Nutrition courses for college students majoring in fields other than nutrition are a good means to help young people understand the relation of good eating habits to health and well-being. The information they gain can be carried over into their personal lives now and will also be applicable later in family living.

The *University of Connecticut*, Storrs, Conn., gives an elective freshmen course, Nutrition in Health, to about 300 nonmajors each year. The course is not open to home economics or nursing students. Those taking it—mostly men—are from all other schools and colleges on campus: education, pharmacy, agriculture, physical education, physical therapy, engineering, business administration, and arts and sciences.

There are no chemistry or other science prerequisites for the course. Reading, lectures, and discussions cover food requirements for optimum health, performance, and resistance to disease; functions of essential nutrients

in the body; symptoms and incidence of malnutrition; and contributions of foods to the body's needs. Economic as well as physiologic aspects of normal nutrition are included. Chief emphasis is on nutrition of the young adult, but nutrition of the family, of mothers and babies, and of persons requiring special diets is also discussed.

Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio, also offers an elective elementary course in nutrition without prerequisites. Students have been from such fields as elementary education and health and physical education. Methods of presenting nutrition information in teaching are emphasized in the course, as are means by which nutrition can be integrated into the total program of education.

Each student does a nutrition project related to his chosen field. Boys in health and physical education have planned units to be used in athletic training. A biology major worked out a nutrition unit for teen-age girls. A prospective social worker studied food for a family with respect to adequacy and cost. A future dental hygienist followed the relation between nutrition and dental health through the life cycle.

New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, State College, N. Mex., a course in normal nutrition that is required of home economics majors is open to nonmajor men and women. The course's central theme is nutrition of the individual and dietary problems of people in the State, of whom a large percentage are Spanish-American. Students analyze their own and local food habits noting good points. They evaluate food and nutrient intake and learn how to correct inadequacies by adding other foods to the diet.

State Nutrition Council stimulates creation of new course.—The Committee on Schools, Colleges and Universities of the Connecticut Nutrition Council approached presidents of teachers colleges in the State with the suggestion of cooperative work in nutrition education. Faculty of two state teachers colleges, *Danbury* and *Willimantic*, have responded to date.

In late 1955 the Council presented materials and held a panel discussion on nutrition teaching at the elementary level for seniors who were studying nutrition education at Danbury. A similar assembly was held for all students at Willimantic. At both sessions panelists included a nutritionist, a representative of the dental group, and a person who discussed illustrative materials.

After the panel session at Danbury, students evaluated their interest in nutrition and found it had increased. Willimantic has added an elective course in Health and Nutrition to its curriculum. This is an outcome, in part, of the meeting.

The Connecticut Nutrition Council is planning further nutrition education meetings and other activities to reach more college students in the State.

Nutrition projects in colleges

Food-habit improvement in nursery school.—Students taking the child guidance course in Home Economics at *New Mexico Western College*, Silver City, N. Mex., carried out a 4-month project to increase food acceptance in 3- to 5-year-olds in the college nursery school. They held tasting sessions each day at midmorning milk time. The children helped prepare unfamiliar foods, chiefly raw vegetables and fruits, in childsize portions, and then tasted them one at a time.

The children's anticipation of tasting was heightened by observing and helping in the food preparation. One portion was given each child. He could have as many more as he asked for. Children who expressed dislike for a food were told pleasantly, "You don't have to like it, but you can learn to eat it."

At the end of 4 months, the students reported to each parent his child's reaction to each food. They learned from the parents that the children were eating and asking for many foods previously disliked and accepting new foods more readily. The college students themselves, besides acquiring a taste for some previously untried foods, had learned to set good examples in their own food acceptance. They also had observed the type of positive yet relaxed adult attitudes which encourage children to try new foods.

College aids the community.—In addition to offering courses in foods and nutrition to all students on campus, the *Prairie View Agricultural and Mechanical College*, Prairie View, Tex., has a number of nutrition activities in which members of nearby communities are included, especially high school students. Among these projects are Better Breakfast Week and Foods and Nutrition Week.

Better breakfasts are boosted by posters and literature composed by students and displayed on campus and in the community in spots the students choose.

High school students and other groups from surrounding towns are invited to Foods and Nutrition Week functions at the college. Parents in nearby towns receive nutrition literature. Special activities are featured for the PTA. Highlight of the week is an invited speaker. Speakers have discussed such subjects as newer trends in foods and nutrition research and the one-world aspect of foods and nutrition.

Food Show Day, held during this week, features an all-campus student forum under the direction of home economics students. Consultants from other depart-

ments answer questions. One year this was a meet-the-press activity. The School of Agriculture, the Division of Industrial Education, the Library, and campus organizations help the School of Home Economics with Foods and Nutrition Week activities. Students are included on the planning committee.

Weight control through nutrition education.—For some time now concern has been expressed regarding the high incidence of overweight among girls on college campuses. Many college girls, being away from home for the first time and having a change in diet at a time when life often becomes more sedentary, tend to overeat.

The Graduate School of Nutrition at *Cornell University*, Ithaca, N. Y., offers nutrition-consultation service for students with weight problems on a medical-referral basis in the student medical clinic. A nutritionist is available at the clinic two afternoons and one morning a week to see students by appointment. This program has been in operation for 15 years.

The Graduate School of Nutrition also operated an experimental community nutrition clinic from October 1951 to February 1954, which was sponsored jointly by the Tompkins County Medical Society, the Tompkins County Board of Health, and the School of Nutrition. Patients were taken only by direct referral from private physicians. Success in weight reduction seemed to be related to the degree of emotional stability of these subjects.

Montana State College, State College, Mont., through the Department of Home Economics, has set up a special course to teach nutrition principles pertinent to weight loss and good health. This course has been designed to develop a practical and sensible approach to gradual but permanent weight loss.

During physical examination for college entrance the physician invited 11 young women who were 12 to 58 pounds overweight to enroll in the proposed weight reduction program. All boarded and roomed in the dormitory.

Once a week for 10 weeks the group met to discuss their problems and learn about nutrition for weight reduction and optimum health. Since the girls were to receive regular dormitory food and get no special dietary privileges, they learned what to choose from food placed before them. This often required changing long-established dietary patterns.

Main principles of the diet were: no second helpings, no eating between meals, eating of everything served except rich desserts and concentrated sweets.

The basic rules of good nutrition were explained. Only a small amount of material was covered at each meeting so there would be plenty of time for discussion

and practical application of principles learned. The imprudence of trying to lose weight by going without meals had to be pointed out frequently. Good health and sense of well-being as well as weight loss were the objectives.

Attendance was good, and weight loss at the end of the 10 weeks varied between 4 and 14 pounds per person, with an average loss of 6 pounds. The girls learned much about their nutritional needs and the caloric value of various foods. They were cooperative and appreciative of the time spent to help them. As the program drew to a close, they requested meetings at least once a month during the remainder of the school year. They felt the assistance and encouragement obtained through the group association were largely responsible for their individual dieting success.

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35TH ANNUAL AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK CONFERENCE WASHINGTON, D. C., NOVEMBER 1957

Excerpts, from three statements, that are of value to nutritionists working with farm families.

1958 outlook for food.—The phrase "little different from 1957" probably best describes the general food situation in prospect for 1958. Supplies are expected to be close to the high level of 1957, and the domestic demand for food will likely remain strong. Civilian consumption of food probably will about equal the 1957 high per-capita rate, exceeding the prewar (1935-39) average by 12 percent. Retail food prices are likely to average a little higher than a year earlier until perhaps mid-1958. (Sherr)

Trends in farm family spending.—Data from studies made in 1955 and 1941 indicate that in 1955 dollars, farm family spending was about two-thirds greater in 1955 than in 1941. . . . In the period between 1941 and 1955, it is estimated that farm families increased their spending proportionately more than urban families and, consequently, farm spending is now closer to urban spending than in the earlier period. . . . Because farm families usually have a considerable amount of home-produced food and usually pay no separate rent for the farm dwelling, their levels of living are closer to the levels of living of urban families than figures on family expenditures usually indicate. . . .

Southern farm families have made greater gains in levels of living in the post World War II period than the families living in the North Central region, so the two regions are now [more similar] than they were a decade ago. In 1945 southern farm families were

spending 69 percent as much as North Central farm operator families [for current consumption], whereas in 1955 they were spending 84 percent as much. . . .

Comparing the various regions of the United States as to level of expenditures in 1955, the Pacific States stand at the top of the eight regions as used in the 1955 study. Next in order were the averages for families in the Mountain States, in the Northeast, and the East North Central States, each of which was above the average for all families in the United States. The average for the West South Central States about equaled that for the United States as a whole. The averages for the West North Central, the South Atlantic, and the East South Central States were below the United States average. . . .

The percentage spent for food did not decline as one might have expected with the increase in total family spending, but remained exactly the same in 1955 as in 1941. Undoubtedly the decreases in the amount of food produced for home consumption, the increased expenditures for food eaten away from home, and the increased purchases of processed or semiprocessed food accounts for this lack of change in the share that food gets of the total family spending dollar. (Brew)

The farmer of today . . . is different from the farmer of fifteen years ago. For one thing there are fewer of him. He is likely to have a little more schooling, and although he need provide for a somewhat smaller family, he has a larger income to do it with. His family is living better—in a house more often than not

equipped with electricity and other modern conveniences—and spending more for many things, including food. . . .

Farmers today are producing less of their own food and depending more on purchases than they used to. This means, on the one hand, they are likely to enjoy a more varied diet—because they can buy things they didn't use to have—but it also means they will have less of some important foods than before, because when they must buy a food they use smaller quantities than when they produce it themselves. Thus, although their diets generally are better than they used to be, not all of the changes are nutritionally desirable. . . .

With home production down, there is less home canning of fruits and vegetables than there used to be, but there is now a considerable amount of home freezing, usually of meat. . . .

As indicated by a sample week in the spring of 1955, we find farm family meals more like city family meals than once was the case. Because farm families now buy more of their food and thus partake of the technological advances in food marketing, and because many farm homes today have a freezer, it is probably true that there is less seasonal variation in farm food consumption than there used to be. . . .

One notable exception to the growing similarity of farm and city diets is in fats and sugars. . . . City dwellers decreased their share of calories from these foods between 1942 and 1955 while farmers increased theirs. . . . The total amount of sugars and sweets used in the home per person in farm families was 1.8 pounds in 1955, 0.4 pounds more than in 1942. City families used 1.1 pounds per person in 1955, only 0.2 pounds more than in the earlier year. . . .

For some common foods—ice cream, soft drinks, lunch meats, and margarine—the farm and city family's weekly shopping lists have become much alike. (Orshansky)

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Symbols refer to—

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FORECASTING THE FUTURE

These are subjects we plan to cover in NCN issues in the coming year:

Integration of nutrition work in the United States.

The parts played by governmental and private agencies, professional associations, and nutrition workers in coordinating nutrition programs—from promotion of research to the spread of practical information to the public.

Choosing a nutritionally good diet.

Use and effectiveness of various materials and techniques for teaching people who are at different stages of the life cycle how to choose a diet nutritionally right for them.

Nutrition in professional training of health and welfare-workers.

How much education in nutrition is given by professional schools to students of medicine, dentistry, nursing, public health, and social welfare. Reports are wanted on surveys of situations in professional schools, actual courses in nutrition and nutrition education, integration of nutrition into courses in related areas of work, and on projects and field work of a nutritional nature.

If you have experience within the scope of these topics to report, please send your stories now. We shall also appreciate leads to other people or agencies that have material on these subjects.

Institute of Home Economics, Agricultural Research Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, in consultation with the Inter-agency Committee on Nutrition Education and School Lunch. (The printing of this publication has been approved by the Bureau of the Budget, July 27, 1955.)